



UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
United States Patent and Trademark Office
Address: COMMISSIONER FOR PATENTS
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450
www.uspto.gov

APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/821,389	04/09/2004	Terrance P. Snutch	381092000624	1599
25225	7590	12/24/2009	EXAMINER	
MORRISON & FOERSTER LLP			PACKARD, BENJAMIN J	
12531 HIGH BLUFF DRIVE				
SUITE 100			ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
SAN DIEGO, CA 92130-2040			1612	
			MAIL DATE	DELIVERY MODE
			12/24/2009	PAPER

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)	
	10/821,389	SNUTCH ET AL.	
	Examiner	Art Unit	
	Benjamin Packard	1612	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

1) Responsive to communication(s) filed on 07 October 2009.
 2a) This action is **FINAL**. 2b) This action is non-final.
 3) Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

4) Claim(s) 1-5, 7, 9-16 and 19-31 is/are pending in the application.
 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
 5) Claim(s) 19-31 is/are allowed.
 6) Claim(s) 1-5, 7 and 9-16 is/are rejected.
 7) Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
 8) Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

9) The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
 10) The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) accepted or b) objected to by the Examiner.
 Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
 Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
 11) The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

12) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
 a) All b) Some * c) None of:
 1. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)	4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)
2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)	Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ .
3) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08) Paper No(s)/Mail Date <u>1pg (8/5/09), 1pg (10/12/09)</u> .	5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application
	6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ .

DETAILED ACTION

Applicant's request for reconsideration of the finality of the rejection of the last Office action is persuasive and, therefore, the finality of that action is withdrawn.

Applicants' arguments, filed 10/07/09, have been fully considered. Rejections and/or objections not reiterated from previous office actions are hereby withdrawn. The following rejections and/or objections are either reiterated or newly applied. They constitute the complete set presently being applied to the instant application.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112 – Scope of Enablement

The following is a quotation of the first paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall contain a written description of the invention, and of the manner and process of making and using it, in such full, clear, concise, and exact terms as to enable any person skilled in the art to which it pertains, or with which it is most nearly connected, to make and use the same and shall set forth the best mode contemplated by the inventor of carrying out his invention.

Claims 1-5, 7, and 9-16 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, first paragraph, because the specification, while being enabling for treatment of formalin-induced pain, N-type calcium channel pain, and alpha1g T-type calcium channel triggered pain, does not reasonably provide enablement for treatment of pain, generally. The specification does not enable any person skilled in the art to which it pertains, or with which it is most nearly connected, to practice the invention commensurate in scope with these claims.

To be enabling, the specification of the patent must teach those skilled in the art how to make and use the full scope of the claimed invention without undue experimentation. In re Wright, 999 F.2d 1557, 1561 (Fed. Cir. 1993). Explaining what is meant by "undue experimentation," the Federal Circuit has stated:

The test is not merely quantitative, since a considerable amount of experimentation is permissible, if it is merely routine, or if the specification in question provides a reasonable amount of guidance with respect to the direction in which the experimentation should proceed to enable the determination of how to practice a desired embodiment of the claimed invention. PPG v. Guardian, 75 F.3d 1558, 1564 (Fed. Cir. 1996).¹

The factors that may be considered in determining whether a disclosure would require undue experimentation are set forth by In re Wands, 8 USPQ2d 1400 (CAFC 1988) at 1404 where the court set forth the eight factors to consider when assessing if a disclosure would have required undue experimentation. Citing Ex parte Forman, 230 USPQ 546 (BdApls 1986) at 547 the court recited eight factors:

- 1) the quantity of experimentation necessary,
- 2) the amount of direction or guidance provided,
- 3) the presence or absence of working examples,
- 4) the nature of the invention,
- 5) the state of the prior art,
- 6) the relative skill of those in the art,
- 7) the predictability of the art, and
- 8) the breadth of the claims.

These factors are always applied against the background understanding that scope of enablement varies inversely with the degree of unpredictability involved. In re Fisher, 57 CCPA 1099, 1108, 427 F.2d 833, 839, 166 USPQ 18, 24 (1970). Keeping that in mind, the Wands factors are relevant to the instant fact situation for the following reasons:

1. The nature of the invention, state and predictability of the art, and relative skill level

¹ As pointed out by the court in In re Angstadt, 537 F.2d 498 at 504 (CCPA 1976), the key word is “undue”, not “experimentation”.

The invention relates to treatment of pain. The relative skill of those in the art is high, that of an MD or PhD. That factor is outweighed, however, by the unpredictable nature of the art. As illustrative of the state of the art, the examiner cites Dworkin et al (Pain, Vol 132, Issue 3 (2007) 237-251) which teaches patients do not respond predictably to first line medications, which include calcium channel inhibitors (pg 247 8. Conclusions).

2. The breadth of the claims

The claims are broad insofar as the type of pain is not limited.

3. The amount of direction or guidance provided and the presence or absence of working examples

The specification provides no direction or guidance for practicing the claimed invention in its “full scope”. No reasonably specific guidance is provided concerning useful therapeutic protocols for treatment of pain, generally, other than formalin-induced pain, N-type calcium channel pain, and alpha1g T-type calcium channel triggered pain. The latter is corroborated by the working examples.

4. The quantity of experimentation necessary

Because of the known unpredictability of the art, and in the absence of experimental evidence, no one skilled in the art would accept the assertion that the instantly claimed agents could be predictably used to treat pain, generally, as inferred by the claim and contemplated by the specification. Accordingly, the instant claims do not comply with the enablement requirement of §112, since to practice the claimed invention in its “full scope” a person of ordinary skill in the art would have to engage in undue experimentation, with no assurance of success.

Allowable Subject Matter

Claims 19-31 are allowed.

Additionally, the compounds of instant claims 1-5, 7, and 9-16 appear to be free of the prior art. The closest prior art, Van Daele (US 4,766,125) discussed in previous Office Action, and Laigle (EP 0458387) discussed in previous Office Actions, do not teach Ar may be a single ring heteroaryl group, such as instantly claimed.

Conclusion

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Benjamin Packard whose telephone number is 571-270-3440. The examiner can normally be reached on M-F 8-5 EST.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Frederick Krass can be reached on 571-272-0580. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

/Benjamin Packard/
Examiner, Art Unit 1612

/Frederick Krass/
Supervisory Patent Examiner, Art Unit 1612